

**PARK BOARD MEETING
Foster Community Center
February 11, 2015**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Kibbey, Adam Hussain, Rita O'Brien, James McClurken, Veronica Gracia-Wing (via phone 8:03 p.m.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Paul Holland, Gib King

OTHERS PRESENT: Brett Kaschinske, Parks and Recreation Director; Kellie Brown, Board Secretary; Nancy Mahlow, Eastside Neighborhood Organization; Anita Beavers, Colonial Village Neighborhood Association; Jack Lang; John Krohn; Harold Leeman; Mark Ledebuhr, Fenner.

CALLED TO ORDER: 7:03 p.m.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Kaschinske provided a letter from Tecumseh River Neighborhood Association regarding the 5-year Master Plan. Kibbey provided board members with a priority list for the master plan.

STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS

None

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Adam Hussain moved to approve the December 10, 2014 and January 14, 2015 minutes as submitted; seconded by Veronica Gracia-Wing. 5 yeas; 0 nays

Motion carried

NEW BUSINESS

Willard Walker Memorial

Kibbey stated we have heard from the Westside Neighborhood Association and they have no problem with renaming St. Joe Park. Veronica Gracia-Wing moved to approve the renaming of St. Joe Park to Willard Walker Park; seconded by Rita O'Brien. 5 yeas; 0 nays.

Motion carried

Park Board Rules of Procedure

Kibbey stated if he understands the changes requested the quorum necessary to act on board items will change according to the number of Park Board members at the time.

Kaschinske stated he took the rules from the Planning Board as follows:

1. The Park Board shall consist of no more than eight (8) members and no less than five (5) members.

4. Five (5) members, or a majority of the persons seated on the Park Board, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and the taking of official actions at its meetings.

5. *No official action shall be taken as to the adoption of a Comprehensive Master Plan, any part of a Comprehensive Master Plan, or to recommend the renaming of property to the City Council without an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the persons seated on the Park Board.*
6. *Any amendment to a motion is by majority vote of those present.*
7. *Whenever a quorum is not present at a regular or special meeting, those present may adjourn the meeting to another time or may meet for the purpose of accumulating and accepting public comments on such matters as are on the agenda. However, no official action(s) may be taken.*
8. The Park Board shall schedule at least one regular meeting each month, usually on the second Wednesday of the month. Meetings will normally begin at 7:00 p.m. and may be held at **Foster Community Center** or other appropriate locations decided by the Board. The date, time, and location of each meeting shall be posted in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Kaschinske stated the Park Board can approve the change, however per city ordinance the changes will have to go to Council for approval. The last time the rules were changed was August 2004.

Adam Hussain moved to approve the changes to the Park Board Rules of Procedure as written and forward to Council for approval; seconded by James McClurken. 5 yeas; 0 nays.

Motion carried

Kaschinske clarified the only way the changes will apply is when they are approved by Council, so there is another step before the changes would be effective.

OLD BUSINESS

5-Year Master Plan

Rick Kibbey provided board members and audience members with an informational sheet on the master plan.

Kaschinske shared a letter from the Tecumseh River Association regarding the master plan.

Nancy Mahlow stated there are several parks on the eastside. Mahlow inquired about the pool at the Schmidt Center and when will it be opened. Kaschinske stated it will be opening in January 2016. Mahlow inquired about the pool at Eastern High School and is it being utilized. Kaschinske stated we currently use Beekman and Gardner pools.

Mahlow wants to see partnerships where we can, such as MSU, major businesses and corporations in the city who would want to help. The city needs to look for other avenues to offset costs. She does not want to see any parks closed or sold.

Mahlow inquired about outdoor basketball and have all the courts been taken down or are there still some in the parks. Kaschinske stated yes some have been removed but there are still basketball courts in some parks.

Mahlow stated gardens are a great asset to the community and assistance for families to feed themselves.

Harold Leeman stated he is on the Gier Advisory Board but is here this evening in regard to the master plan. The parking lot at Foster Center needs to be repaved. The gym at Foster needs to be renovated and brought up to date. He also inquired if there are plans to keep up the skate park and maintain it.

Kaschinske stated there is no capital outlay for the skate park and there is no anticipation of anything over \$15,000 needed which is considered a capital improvement project. The Red Cedar project will bring new users to the skate park.

Anita Beavers stated she would like to see improved and safer endings to the bike lanes and the public requires improved educational information on the rules of bikes on the road.

Kaschinske stated there is a non-motorized plan for the city, which is available to view on the Public Service Department's web page.

Beavers also inquired if anyone has contacted the city of Chicago about the costs involved in maintaining a plinth which is what is being discussed for installation at Red Cedar.

Beavers would like to see the parks in the Colonial Village area used for summer programming and the maintenance of the parks continued.

John Krohn supports the naturalization portion of the plan and inquired if it is a policy of the plan.

Kibbey stated it evolved out of the "naturalization" or non-mowing of the parks and was followed up with organizations to do true naturalization.

Kaschinske reviewed the goals of the plan and naturalization is goal number one.

Kaschinske stated Foster and Gier parking lots are used a lot; whereas the Ferris parking lot may be received back from the State of Michigan and the lot size would be reduced.

Kibbey stated we are using impervious surfaces in the new parking lots.

Mark Ledebuhr stated many projects take multiple years. Two things at Fenner is the use of herbicide and training and the other is fire and controlled burns. It is expensive to have professionals so they are looking at getting more volunteers trained.

Kaschinske stated there has been an increase in volunteer participation at various parks.

Ledebuhr stated Fenner has over four (4) miles of trails and will add another 3/4 of a mile this year. They are one curb cut away from integrating with the River Trail. He understands the Greenways Trails are looking at coming back the 127 corridor and connecting to Fenner's trail is a no brainer.

Kaschinske stated we are talking about extending the trail in cooperation with Emergency Management.

Ledebuhr inquired if there are other neighborhood park groups interested in connecting to the trail system.

Kibbey asked board members if anything heard this evening required any revision to the 5-year Master Plan draft the Board received.

Kaschinske inquired what the Board wants to do with the letter received from the Tecumseh River Association; does it need to go on file as part of the packet for this meeting.

Hussain stated they would like to have referenced in the master plan a fishing pier, trail ways, canoe launch and signs.

Kaschinske stated trails are already in the master plan.

Gracia-Wing inquired if we have to specify each project.

Kaschinske stated he does not see anything in their letter that would require changing the plan and he has discussed this with Lucas from the Tecumseh neighborhood.

Kaschinske stated he and Andy Kilpatrick from the Transportation Department are meeting with the Tecumseh group at the end of the month to discuss the blind curve area around the pond and the lack of sidewalks.

Kibbey is concerned about the CIP list and how few items are on it. Kaschinske stated the last plan had 12 items listed and only one project was done which was Crego. This list is more focused on projects that can be done.

Hussain stated now is the time to dream big. We are in the process of selling two large parks for a sum of money and the funds could be used for projects.

Kibbey inquired if there is time for a work session and for another meeting.

Kaschinske stated a project does not have to be listed in the plan and the 5-year plan can be amended.

Gracia-Wing inquired if amending the plan required public hearings. Kaschinske stated yes.

Kibbey reviewed the letter from the Tecumseh River Association and the amount of projects. There are a lot of neighborhood organizations who would want the same type of list included in the plan. If board members are open to the process of additions to the CIP list he is okay with going ahead with the plan with one exception and that is before he is going to vote on a basketball court he would like discussion on how it will be managed to avoid creating a massive problem.

Hussain has concerns for a basketball complex and how it would be staffed.

Kaschinske stated it would not be staffed at all times. It would be staffed to program at the site or staffed during peak hours. It would have cameras and be gated and would be used dawn to dusk. This has been discussed with Chief Yankowski and everyone understands the concerns with basketball courts. The locations being considered are not in residential areas and are very visible. This would come before the Board and needs public support. Sites being considered are Davis Park and Marshall Park due to visibility and not being in neighborhoods.

Hussain stated at Davis Park he has concerns about the families using the park and the language that could occur on the courts.

O'Brien stated this could be in the plan, discussed and would fit with the diversity goal.

Kibbey has concerns with supervision and control of the site. The city could contract with churches for use of their gyms for basketball. In terms of the vicinity of Marshall Park he would be supportive of a youth football complex. There are two high schools within two blocks of the park that could benefit from a football complex.

Hussain stated this does not tie us into anything, but keeps us in the forefront of opportunities.

Kibbey stated with the understanding the plan could be amended at a later date is there a motion to approve the draft of the master plan.

Adam Hussain moved to approve the draft of the Master Plan; seconded by James McClurken. 5 yeas; 0 nays

Motion carried

UPDATES

Frances Park

Kaschinske stated Frances Park has been a subject before this board and Council in the past concerning the condition of the park. We are in the process of removing shrubs, trees and plants. We are replacing the pergola and replanting. There will be renovations on the roof of the pavilion and sidewalks.

McClurken commented the plants were part of an original plan and he is troubled the individuals doing the work do not know what they are doing. The plants and trees should not all been removed and could have been trimmed.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully Submitted: Kellie Brown, Park Board Secretary

Approved March 11, 2015